

AAATE Newsletter

From the Newsletter Editor

Dear AAATE Members,

It has been a busy period for AAATE and its members. Unfortunately, we have lost Martyn Cooper from the Board, due to other professional commitments, but luckily Pier-Luigi Emiliani has been able to step into his place and we all welcome him to the Board. Christian Buhler and Harry Knops organized a stand at the RESNA Conference in the USA to publicize AAATE, its activities and the activities of its members, which created considerable interest at the conference. AAATE has also contributed to the consultation process for the development of the 6th FP for research and development in the CEU.

Members have also been very busy, as we have information about numerous conferences and meetings planned, a book with contributions from numerous members and a new research group formed at the Open University.

Finally of course, the Board, the AAATE group in Slovenia, and hopefully many members are preparing for the AAATE 2001 Conference in Ljubljana. We hope to see many of you there.

In the meantime, have a very enjoyable and productive summer.

Helen Petrie
Newsletter Editor
Hatfield, UK, July 2001

AAATE 2001: The AAATE Conference

The programme for the AAATE 2001 Conference in Ljubljana, Slovenia has been finalized and can be studied on the conference web site: <http://aaate2001.ir-rs.si/program.htm>. Approximately 120 papers will be given by speakers from 27 different countries throughout Europe and beyond. In addition, the conference will include a variety of keynote speakers, panel and poster sessions and a scientific and commercial exhibition. The conference will also be host to an inter-continental meeting of researchers in assistive and re-

habilitative technology from Europe, north America, Japan and Australia.

For further information about the conference, consult <http://aaate2001.ir-rs.si/> or contact Prof. Crt Marincek, c/- Cankarjev Dom, Cultural and Congress Centre, Presernova 10, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia. Email: kongres@cd-cc.si

Report on RESNA 2001 Conference dissemination activities

As a consequence of the signing of the Tokushima agreement on international cooperation between AAATE, ARATA, RESJA and RESNA, the AAATE board decided to undertake a follow up at the RESNA annual conference. Luckily, two board members (Christian Bühler, President and Harry Knops, Secretary) were able to raise funds externally to the AAATE, so that the cost of the activity for AAATE was bearable. We thank IRV and FTB as well IOS Press and the Centre for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange (CIRRIE) for their support. Three activities were planned:

- 1) a visit to the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR) in Washington;
- 2) a presentation about European activities in the RESNA research symposium;
- 3) a booth in the RESNA exhibition.

The AAATE board endorsed the activity, whereas Christian and Harry dealt with the details.

Hence, AAATE offered to support members' dissemination efforts during the RESNA 2001 annual conference in June, 22–26, 2001. AAATE wanted to show information about ongoing activities and results of projects in Europe at this important USA conference. It was intended to display and give away material from AAATE and work of AAATE members.

- This type of action can support members' interest of dissemination and exploitation of their own work.
- Hence, AAATE will support members, but also the interest of the European players to increase the visibility of their good work.

This was announced in the membership mailing in spring 2001. After our offer to members to provide material, which they want to be displayed on the AAATE booth during RESNA, Harry Knops and Christian Bühler collected the material:

AAATE Conference preliminary programme
 AAATE flyer
 AAATE Journal and related material from the publisher
 CEU 4th FP project synopsis
 CEU/IST project synopsis
 COST 219bis materials
 Daily
 EUSTAT
 FORTUNE
 HEART
 IMPACT
 INCLUDE
 PROMISE
 RNIB information brochures

The booth was ordered with RESNA and all practical details including 3 posters prepared.

The visit to NIDRR was undertaken in Washington on the 20th of June. Christian, Harry and Luc de Witte met with Robert Jaeger and William Peterson. The discussions dealt with the following topics:

- Update of USA developments: Freedom Initiative of President Bush, experiences with Section 255, enacting the Federal Procurement act 508, new Rehabilitation Engineering Research Centres (RERCs)
- Update of European developments: eEurope/eAccessibility, 6th FP (IST and QoL), AAATE conference in Ljubljana
- International cooperation: agreement between AAATE, ARATA, RESJA and RESNA, follow up of Rehabilitation International meeting in Rio, upcoming issues (European Year of People with Disabilities 2003, potential for international and EU-US cooperation)

The exchange complements the talks between the EU and USA administrations on cooperative activities. It is hoped that this contact will support an improvement of coordination of research programmes and activities on both sides of the Atlantic. A follow up meeting in Ljubljana Slovenia in September 2001 is envisaged.

With the help of Luc de Witte, Harry and Christian brought the material for the exhibition (about 250 kg) on their flights to the conference venue in Reno, Nevada

on the 21st of June. The booth was set up the following day to be ready for the opening in the evening. The booth was placed close the booths of RESJA and RESNA. During the days of operation the booth was staffed by Christian (D), Harry (NI) and Luc (NI) and by AAATE members which attended the RESNA: Ase Brand (Dk), Ilka Saaarnio (Fi), Erland Winterberg (DK), Martin (UK). There was remarkable interest on the part of the RESNA attendees concerning European activities. We were able to have many conversations about European activities and to hand out much of the material we flew in. Particular interest was given to the Ljubljana conference, the AAATE Journal, the CEU project synopses and the various project materials of members.

Many thanks to all who supported AAATE doing this service! (Organisations in alphabetical order)

CEU/ IST "TIDE" Unit
 CEU/ QoL "key action on the older population"
 Centre for International Rehabilitation Research Information and Exchange
 Danish Centre
 FTB
 IOS Press
 IRV
 Ljubljana Cancarev Dom
 Ljubljana Rehabilitation Centre
 RESNA
 SIVA
 STAKES

The general impression of all AAATE members involved in Reno was very positive. It was felt that AAATE has represented our European field very successfully. With the presentations in the Research Symposium, the remarkable presence in the exhibits, the many talks and discussions of all AAATE attendees, we were able to raise the awareness of activities going on in Europe. In the public meeting of the RESNA International Committee Christian, Harry and Ilka took part. To complement this, the AAATE board members have also held a meeting with Mary Binion (RESNA President), Simon Margolis (RESNA President elect), Larry Pencak (RESNA Director) and others.

Christian Bühler
 President

Change of Board membership for AAATE

In May 2001, Martyn Cooper resigned from the AAATE Board due pressure of other work commit-

ments. Marytn served in the board for about 16 months. We are very grateful for his services, and respect his decision. We wish Martyn every success in his new responsibilities for disability related issues at the UK's Open University (see item in National News, below). We also hope that he will support our AAATE mission as an active member in the future.

As you know our board has six positions and we are all volunteers. We have a lot of AAATE day-to-day business and also strategic planning and development of our organisation. Therefore, the board took immediate action to fill the vacant position according to our constitution. We do very much appreciate to be able to announce that our member Pier Luigi Emiliani was willing and able to step in, following a unanimous decision of the board to ask him. Pier Luigi is a very knowledgeable member, with a long record in our field. Many of you already know him well. He was nominated and ran for the AAATE board at the last election. We very much welcome him in the board and look forward to fruitful cooperation.

The board will take the challenges ahead in this renewed team. We hope for your active support.

Christian Buhler
President

AAATE Contribution to the CEU 6th FP Planning

As part of the consultation process on the development of the 6th Framework for research and development in the EU, the AAATE prepared a position paper on the funding of research and development in the area of assistive and rehabilitative technology. This position paper has been submitted to Mr. Henry Haglund, Head of Unit for People with Special Needs (INFSO, B2), and in one of the official consultation meetings of the CEU. The position paper is available on the AAATE web site at: <http://www.fernuni-hagen.de/FTB/aaate/comments.htm>

News from eEurope

A Communication of the CEU on the adoption of the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) guidelines for public websites is under preparation. It is expected to be published in September, the adoption is scheduled to be done by the end of 2001.

For further information on the WAI guidelines, see <http://www.w3c.org/WAI>

ICCHP 2002: 5th International Conference on Computers Helping People with Special Needs, 15–20 July 2002, University of Linz, Austria

The call for papers has been published for the next ICCHP, to take place in Linz in the summer of 2002. Some features of the conference include:

- ICCHP offers a platform for outstanding researchers, practitioners and experts to present their work on all aspects of information, communication and assistive technology for people with disabilities and elderly people.
- Specialists are invited to organise and chair specific Thematic Sessions within the framework of the conference.
- Contributions will be published in Springer Lecture Notes in Computer Science
- ICCHP wants to foster the transfer of know-how between research and practice and to increase the audience to the outstanding presentations. Authors and non publishing participants (e.g. project consortia) are invited to take part at a very low participation fee. Rooms and facilities for meetings will be provided.
- Companies are invited to take part in the exhibition and to give more intensive introductions in product workshops and seminars.

Important dates are:

Deadline for abstracts	January 31, 2002
Notification of acceptance	March 1, 2002
Publication of abstracts on the WWW	March 15, 2002
Preliminary programme	March 15, 2002
Deadline for full, camera ready copy	May 1, 2002

News of projects and activities by members

Book by AAATE members from across Europe

Inclusive Design Guidelines for HCI. Edited by Colette Nicolle, HUSAT, Loughborough University, UK and Julio Abascal, University of the Basque Country, Spain. Published by Taylor and Francis. ISBN 0-7484-0948-3. For further information see www.ergonomicsarena.com

Professionals in the field of human-computer interaction (HCI) are becoming increasingly aware of the needs of people who are older or disabled, a popula-

tion that is quickly growing. They also need to ensure that systems are designed for all, with specific consideration of these groups – not only computer systems but also assistive and adaptive technologies and specific applications such as telecommunications, public access terminals, systems for travellers, and home automation products. Designers need to monitor the latest developments in the design of HCI and to appreciate their impact on accessibility and usability. This book stems from the work on the International Federation for Information Processing's Working Group on Human-Computer Interaction and Disability. It serves to help designers world-wide find relevant guidelines for the design of HCI, to facilitate the use of advanced technologies by disadvantaged groups, and enable them to assess the suitability of the guidelines they find.

Key features include:

- the first text to take a broad overview of design guidelines for people who are elderly and people with disabilities
- full resource of references
- written by HCI professionals and developers of design guidelines

National news

France

Handicap 2002, the second conference on assistive technology will be held in Paris, 13 and 14 June 2002. This conference has a national interest but papers in English are accepted. The call for papers is available on <http://www.lasc.univ-metz.fr/ifrath/handicap2002>.

Participation of English speakers or session organizers is welcome. Please contact J.M. Toulotte jmt@cal.univ-lille.fr

Spain

The Second Conference on Augmentative and Alternative Communication – ISAAC Spain 2001 “The Communication Odyssey” will take place in Valencia, 6–8 September.

Keynote speakers are as follows:

Stephen von Tetzchner, (University of Oslo), Developmental Issues in A&A Communication Intervention
 Alan Turner-Smith, Guy's, King's & St. Thomas School of Medicine (London), European Approaches to Education and Training in Assistive Technology

Sue Balandin (University of Sydney), Cumberland College of Health Sciences (Australia), Health and quality of life issues for older people who use AAC

Carne Basil (Universidad de Barcelona), A&A Communication in practice: a challenge to identify significant interventions.

For further information: <http://acceso.uv.es/isaac/castellano/congreso2.htm> (in Spanish)

U.K.

Accessible Educational Media (AEM): New group formed at the Open University, UK

A new research group has been established at the Open University (OU) from July 2001. The Accessible Educational Media group is a research group but is specifically designed to disseminate the outcomes and lessons learned in the process of this research across the University. This is to ensure that the needs of disabled people are addressed in the development of the OU's Web-based course components, from the conceptual design stage onwards.

The Open University has over 20 years history of research and development in technologies enabling disabled students to access its courses. Until recently this has been principally within the work of the Multimedia and Enabling Technologies Group (METG). Partly in response to the growing importance of the World-Wide-Web in OU courses this work is being reconstituted within AEM.

The AEM group is seeking to become a centre of excellence for research into issues of accessibility in electronic media. Three major ongoing projects PEARL, SALT, and Alternatives to Print, form the foundation of its research work.

PEARL (an EU IST project) is developing a system for the remote control of teaching experiments over the WWW. It is developing an innovative approach of automatically offering different interfaces to different users depending on their needs, abilities and use of assistive technology. This approach could be applicable to promoting accessibility in many complex web based applications. See: <http://kmi.open.ac.uk/projects/pearl/>.

SALT (Specifications for Accessible Learning Technologies) is a major partnership led by the National Center for Accessible Media (NCAM), in Boston Mass. and the IMS Global Learning Consortium. It is seeking to promote accessibility in educational software by building access criteria into the emerging standards in this field and to catalyse early delivery of accessible

technical products, which allow people with disabilities to access learning resources. The Open University, represented by AEM, is an implementation partner in SALT. They have been participating in the specification development and will be developing and evaluating prototypes conforming to these draft standards or access specifications and feeding back the experience and results of this work into the standardisation process. See: <http://ncam.wgbh.org/salt/>.

Started in 1989, Alternatives to Print, an umbrella project has had notable successes in supporting the production and use of alternative media for courseware. This includes developing DREAM/ReadOut which together enable students to work with both synthesised speech and digitally recorded readings of OU course material. These are now providing alternative access to OU course material through the University's Student Services but further development work is ongoing.

The Accessible Educational Media group is led by Martyn Cooper who can be contact for further information:

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A national conference on assistive technology, RAATE 2001: Recent Advances in Assistive Technology and Engineering, November 5th and 6th, Birmingham Botanical Gardens

RAATE 2001 is a conference about Assistive Technology products and services that enable independence. It is the first interdisciplinary conference of its kind in the UK. Unlike other conferences it does not focus on a particular user group, single profession, industry sector or service.

For further details contact:

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 Denmark Hill, London, SE5 9RX, UK
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 Fax: +44 (0)20 7346 1651;
 E-mail: core@kcl.ac.uk

This conference is for all people who work with AT, develop or conduct research on AT, or have a particular interest in this area. This includes:

- Occupational Therapists
- Teachers
- Speech and Language Therapists
- IT Co-ordinators
- Physiotherapists
- Researchers
- Rehabilitation Engineers
- Suppliers
- Clinical Engineers
- Manufacturers
- Maintenance contractors

The aim of the RAATE Conference is to bring these groups together to share their experience and knowledge. The programme includes instructional courses to provide an introduction to different types of AT, together with plenary and parallel sessions that cover AT current research, service developments, and professional issues. An extensive trade exhibition will allow delegates to see and discuss the latest equipment in the field.

The instructional courses will provide an introduction to different types of AT. A wide range of AT will be considered in this first conference including:

- Powered mobility
- Seating
- Computer Access
- Environmental control
- Smart home technology
- Virtual reality
- Alternative and Augmentative Communication (AAC)

Call for papers: You are invited to submit an abstract for a presentation on service experience, new developments, or research in any of the areas of Assistive Technology listed.

Please submit an abstract of approximately 250 words and indicate the length of time you require for your presentation: 10, 20 or 30 minutes.

Submissions should be received by Friday 27th July.

Diary of forthcoming conferences of interest to members

2001

AUGUST*USSAAC Conference 2001: An AAC Odyssey*

2–4 August, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA

Further information: www.isaac-online.org/events/*HCI International 2001: 9th International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction and 1st international Conference on Universal Access in Human-Computer Interaction*

5–10 August, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA

Further information: hcie2001.engr.wics.edu/*CT2001: Fourth International Conference on Cognitive Technology: Instruments of the Mind*

6–9 August, University of Warwick, UK

Further information: www.dcs.warwick.ac.uk/~wmb/ctwebsite/index.htm*20th International Cartographic Conference (ICC2001)*

6–10 August, Beijing, China

The conference will include a symposium of papers entitled “Maps for handicapped people”

Further information: www2.sbsm.gov.cn/icc2001/**SEPTEMBER***AAATE 2001*

3–6 September, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Further information: Prof. Crt Marincek, c/- Cankarjev Dom, Cultural and Congress Centre, Presernova 10, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia.

E-mail: kongres@cd-cc.si;Website: www.cd-cc.si/AAATE2001/*The Second Conference on Augmentative and Alternative Communication – ISAAC (Spain)*

6–8 September, Valencia, Spain

Further information: <http://acceso.uv.es/isaac/castellano/congreso2.htm> (in Spanish)*6th Biennial AAC Conference*

15 September, Dortmund, Germany

Further information: www.isaac-online.de**OCTOBER***19th Annual Closing the Gap Conference*

18–20 October, Bloomington, Minnesota, USA

Further information: www.closingthegap.com/*Integrating Differences: Theories and Applications of Universal Design*

19–20 October, New York, USA

Further information: Universal Design Symposium 2001, Teaching Institute, C913, Fashion Institute of Technology, Seventh Avenue at 27th St., New York, New York 10001-5992, USA.

Fax: +1 212 217 7910;

E-mail: dkoslin@fitsuny.edu**NOVEMBER***Human Factors in Telecommunication 2001*

5–7 November, Bergen, Norway

Further information: www.hft.org

Topics include “design for disabled and older people”, “trans-generation design”

RAATE 2001: Recent Advances in Assistive Technology and Engineerings

5–6 November, Birmingham, UK

Further information: www.raate.org.ukE-mail core@kcl.ac.uk (see announcement above)*Silent Voices: an International Conference on AAC, Disability and Human Rights*

22–24 November, Calcutta, India

Further information: www.iicpindia.com**2002****APRIL***CHI '02: Human Factors in Computing Systems*

20–25 April, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

JUNE*Handicap 2002* 13–14 June, Paris, FranceFurther information: <http://www.lasc.univ-metz.fr/ifrath/handicap2002>. (see announcement above)**JULY***ICCHP '02: 8th International Conference on Computers Helping People with Special Needs*

15–20 July, Linz, Austria

Further information: www.mvblind.uni-linz.ac.at/icchp/ (see announcement above)*Vision 2002: 7th International Conference on Low Vision*

21–25 July, G?teborg, Sweden
 Website: www.congrex.com/vision2002

AUGUST

ISAAC 2002: 10th International Conference of the International Society for Augmentative and Alternative Communication

10–15 August, Odense, Denmark
 Further information: www.isaac2002.dk

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